

## Publix Grocery Store – Site Plan

Staff Report: Andy Bauer  
Application #: ZA21-000077

Planning Commission Meeting Date: January 25, 2022

Applicant: Ryan Fitz, Columbia  
Engineering & Services

Property Location: 1720 Gulf Shores Parkway

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

### Summary of Request

The applicant seeks Site Plan approval to construct a 24,496sf Publix grocery store at 1720 Gulf Shores Parkway. The property is zoned BG General Business. If approved, the former Winn Dixie grocery store will be demolished and Publix will be rebuilt in the footprint.

### Existing Conditions & Surrounding Context

The property is located at 1720 Gulf Shores Parkway. The specific site is the former Winn Dixie grocery store within the Paradise Isle Shopping Center. The property is zoned BG (General Business) and the surrounding zoning and land uses are as follows:

- North – BG General Business / Gulf Shores United Methodist Church Campus
- South – BG General Business / Gulf Shores Utilities
- East – BG General Business / Dolphin Villas Apartments
- West – BG General Business / Tuesday Morning retail store, Alabama Credit Union Bank

### Background

**October 5, 2021 Board of Zoning Adjustment**– The Board of Zoning Adjustment granted a variance to the 40ft Build-to Line requirement of Table 8-3B: BG District Area and Dimensional Requirements. The Build-to Line establishes the maximum set back allowed from the front lot line. The variance allowed a new building to be constructed in the same footprint of the Winn Dixie store.

### Proposed Site Plan

The applicant proposes to construct a 24,496sf Publix grocery store. Details of the site plan are as follows:

- Lot Size: 4.67ac
- Building Height (Max. 8 stories): 1 story
- Maximum Building Coverage (Max. 65%): 23%
- Impervious Surface Coverage: Reduced from 88% to 87%
- Minimum Front Setback (20ft): 292ft (Variance granted)
- Minimum Rear Setback (20ft): 31ft
- Minimum Side Setback (10ft): Not Applicable
- Minimum Off-street Parking for Shopping Center (296 spaces): 301 spaces

### ANALYSIS

Future Land Use Plan – The Future Land Use Plan designates this area as “Commercial/Mixed Use”. Commercial is a broad category of uses that typically includes beach tourism, community and neighborhood retail, office, restaurant, hospitality, accommodations, and light manufacturing businesses. The proposed use complies with the Future Land Use Plan.

Zoning – The property is zoned BG General Business District. The BG zoning district is intended to provide locations for a mixture of commercial, service, lodging, multi-family, and other compatible uses serving community needs, where an attractive appearance of buildings and their premises is important to the successful conduct of business. The proposed use complies with the allowable uses and area and dimensional regulations of the BG Zoning District.

## **Plan Review**

The request is to repurpose one existing space within a multi-tenant shopping center. The existing Winn Dixie building will be demolished and a Publix store rebuilt in its place. The Site Plan application will bring the property into compliance with the access, parking, landscaping, architectural, site lighting, drainage, and fire safety regulations. The total amount of impervious coverage will be reduced with the addition of new landscaped areas.

Access – Vehicular: The parking lot has been reconfigured for better vehicular circulation. There will be a more direct vehicular route from the shopping centers entrance on Highway 59 through the parking lot to the existing driveway connection on East 1<sup>st</sup> Street. A delivery truck routing plan has also been submitted and approved by City staff. The truck routing plan indicates trucks will access the service area from East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and then exit on East 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Pedestrian: Several new connections are proposed which will improve pedestrian access and circulation on the property. The applicant plans to connect the shopping center to the existing sidewalk along Gulf Shores Parkway. The east and west walls are separated from the abutting tenant spaces by a 5ft walkway which will provide pedestrian access from the entrance of the building to the parking spaces at the rear of the store. There is also a large striped pedestrian crossing zone to allow customers to safely travel from the parking lot to the store.

The applicant is providing a \$26,640 fee in lieu of constructing the required sidewalks along East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

Parking – The parking lot has been reconfigured to comply with the minimum number of parking spaces in a row and landscape island requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. A portion of an existing green space will be renovated to provide additional parking spaces.

The applicant proposes to share parking with the Gulf Shores United Methodist Church. The existing uses and Publix grocery store are required 296 parking spaces and there are 301 parking spaces available. Publix will also provide the required 9 bicycle parking spaces near the front entrance of the building.

Building Architecture – The proposed Publix building will occupy the footprint of the former Winn Dixie store and will improve the character of the existing development. The front façade of the building features the main entrance and has stone and stucco finishes. The east, west and rear sides of the building are split faced concrete masonry units. All exterior service areas and equipment will be screened with similar building materials and finishes as the Publix building.

Landscaping – Similar to the access and parking, the landscaping on the property will be brought into compliance with the landscape provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. Landscape islands, of required dimensions, are provided in the parking lot and planted with trees and shrubs. A 10ft landscape strip will be added along the property's border with Gulf Shores Parkway and the shrubs will be planted within the required landscape buffers along East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street. The new shrubs along with the existing trees will help buffer the rear service areas of the Publix store.

Tree Protection – A tree survey has been provided. The tree survey indicates the caliper of protected trees on the site exceeds the caliper of trees to be removed, therefore no remediation is required on behalf of the developer.

Drainage – Overall, pervious area is being reduced and the existing drainage system is designed to accommodate the new building and other site improvements. The Engineering Department has reviewed and approved the drainage plans.

Exterior Lighting – The proposed lighting plan complies with the Zoning Ordinance regulations. The existing pole mounted lights will be replaced with 18 new poles and full cut-off light fixtures.

Four additional full-cut off lights are mounted on the building.

Trash Collection – The proposed dumpster area is to be located at the rear of the building and has been screened in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance regulations. A will serve letter has been submitted from Waste Pro indicating the dumpsters can be adequately serviced.

Department and Agency Reviews – The Fire Marshal has conditionally approved the Site Plan and Engineering Department has reviewed and approved the Site Plan.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the Site Plan with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall pay a \$26,640 sidewalk fee in lieu of construction of the required sidewalks along East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
2. Fire Marshal.
  - a. Engineering showing that the Available Water Supply and Infrastructure including location meets the designed Required Fire Flow of the building and it's Fire Protection Systems as per the 2021 IFC.

**ATTACHMENTS:** Site Plan Set, Draft Resolution



## **RESOLUTION ZA21-000077**

### **Publix Grocery Store Site Plan**

Be it resolved by the Gulf Shores Planning Commission while in regular session on January 25, 2022, and by a vote of 7-0, hereby approves subject to the special conditions set out below and based on the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions related to the proposed Site Plan for Publix Grocery Store to be located at 1720 Gulf Shores Parkway:

1. The Plan is consistent in all respects with the Comprehensive Plan and the purpose and intent of the applicable district.
2. The Plan is in conformance with all applicable regulations of the applicable district.
3. The Plan is in conformance in all respects with the City's Subdivision Regulations and all other applicable City requirements including design, adequacy and construction of streets, drainage, utilities and other Essential Services or facilities.
4. The Plan is consistent with good design standards in respect to all internal and external relationships, including but not limited to
  - a. Relationship to Adjacent properties;
  - b. Internal circulation, both vehicular and pedestrian;
  - c. Design of access and egress and impact on Adjacent Thoroughfares;
  - d. Disposition and use of Open Space, provision of Screening and/or Buffering, and preservation of existing natural features including trees, Wetlands, and Dunes;
  - e. Size and apparent Bulk of Structures;
  - f. Building arrangements both between Buildings in the proposed development and those on abutting sites.
5. The Plan is in conformance in all respects with City policy in respect to sufficiency of ownership, guarantees for completion of all required improvements, and, if private, the guarantee for continued maintenance.

#### **Approval is subject to the following Special Conditions:**

Staff recommends approval of the Site Plan with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall pay a \$26,640 sidewalk fee in lieu of construction of the required sidewalks along East 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and East 1<sup>st</sup> Street prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.
2. Fire Marshal. Engineering showing that the Available Water Supply and Infrastructure including location meets the designed Required Fire Flow of the building and its Fire Protection Systems as per the 2021 IFC.

Be advised that before any construction activities can commence on the property, City permits must be issued prior to any construction on the site. A Building Permit must be obtained within two years of the date of this Resolution or the Site Plan will become null and void.

This resolution shall become effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this 25<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2022.

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Robert Steiskal, Jr.  
Chairman, Planning Commission

Attest:

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Mell Davis  
Secretary, Planning Commission